

DISEASES OF HORTICULTURAL CROPS

As a result of the abnormal weather conditions, fungous diseases and insect pests were more troublesome than usual.

Brown-rot of Stone-fruits.—In the Auckland district during the ripening and blossoming period, brown-rot has been more active. In other districts little loss was occasioned.

Fireblight.—Fireblight infection has again been in evidence in the pip-fruit orchards near Hastings and in Canterbury.

Silver-leaf continues to take its toll of stone-fruit trees. In Hawke's Bay the incidence of silver-leaf was somewhat greater than it has been in recent years.

Red Mite.—The dry conditions experienced in Auckland and Hawke's Bay caused a considerable increase in the mite population.

Codling-moth.—The control of codling-moth has been effective in most districts this season because growers have given stricter attention to efficient spraying. In the Moutere Hills district, however, growers were handicapped through lack of water, and consequently codling-moth was more prevalent than usual.

Citrus Canker.—Small outbreaks of citrus canker took place in the Tauranga commercial orchards and in a nursery in New Plymouth. They were promptly and effectively dealt with.

Crown Gall has been found to be prevalent on Chinese gooseberries, although not seriously affecting growth or cropping propensities.

Cicada was reported to be causing serious injury to citrus trees and Chinese-gooseberry plants in the Kerikeri district.

Red-legged Earth-mite (Halotydeus destructor).—In the spring of 1946 an infection of red-legged earth-mite occurred in the Bay View area of the Hawke's Bay district, a lesser infection being located at a later date in the Gisborne area. This pest is new to the Dominion, and steps are being taken, in conjunction with officers of the entomological staff of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, to eradicate this pest before it spreads to other parts of the Dominion.

Other pests and diseases were not troublesome during the year.

HORTICULTURAL EXPERIMENTAL STATION

During the year plans have been well advanced towards the establishment of a horticultural experimental station near Levin, where it is proposed to conduct systematic experimental work on the more urgent horticultural and market-garden problems. In the past attempts to solve these problems have been based on cultural practices developed overseas, and these do not necessarily apply to New Zealand conditions. It is also proposed to lay down trials and experiments investigating the growing of vegetables.

Through the experimental work at this station it is hoped to give a much better advisory service to market-gardeners, horticulturists, and private gardeners.

REHABILITATION

Reports have been supplied to the Rehabilitation Department on various properties comprising either nurseries, market gardens, orchards, or apiaries concerning their suitability for the settling of prospective ex-servicemen. After the ex-servicemen have been established, advice and guidance on horticultural activities have been given.